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THE BOOKSHELF SPEAKS

MEANWHILE *by* H. G. WELLS.

This is by no means a new book, but is deserving of perusal nevertheless. Using a unique structure, Mr. Wells kills two birds with one stone, the British coal situation and Mussolini. Mr. Wells claims that the British coal industry is where it is because of the indifference of the wealthy operators. The landed gentry with coal property, such as the *Rylands*, pay little or no attention to the condition of the miners who work for them. The tale would take on the aspect of stereotyped, down-trodden labor if it were not for the romance that the author builds around his characters.

Phillip, the youngest member of the family, is spending a protracted honeymoon with his young wife at his estate on the Riviera. Through *Sem-pack*, who is a philosopher and general compendium of knowledge, *Phillip* learns of the evil of his ways and tries to rectify them as best he can. The timely occurrence of the General Strike in England at this point gives Mr. Wells the opportunity to express his ideas and views through the medium of *Sem-pack*. This last mentioned man is practically a living picture of the author, if outer appearances only are taken in account. Emotionally, it is impossible to say whether it is an accurate portrait of the author or not. It is a rather subtle device for an author to inject himself into a story as Wells has done, but it is apt to become dangerous.

The author preaches the gospel of "meanwhile." He says that we dream of what is to come but the average person does nothing to bring on the golden age of the future, being content to listen to the dreams of the philosophers and comment upon the coming millennium. Meanwhile we busy ourselves with the petty details that confront us. The millennium, however, cannot come at once; it must be a gradual unfolding.

Mussolini gets a few barbs. There is a rather exciting passage regarding the smuggling of an Italian fugitive over to the safety zone of Monte Carlo. *Mrs. Rylands* engineered the whole scheme and must be applauded for her noble effort. The outside world has heard occasional stories of the brutality characteristic of the Black Shirts. This one episode brings a more vivid picture to us of the methods used by the Facisti in bringing Italy under their subjection.

The current fallacy of misrepresenting the people foreign to the authors' land is again repeated. Mr. Wells does not represent a cultured American as using the idiom of the western bad-lands, but he names his one and only American character *Plantagenet-Buchan!* The hyphenated name is peculiar to the British and the author is not fair in labelling a good American thus.

If for nothing more than to get a resume of the British coal situation as well as conditions in Italy

this book is worth reading. The matter is presented in a far more interesting way than newspaper dispatches or editorials would use in giving it to the public.

A PRESIDENT IS BORN *by* FANNIE HURST. ...

From her newspaper experience, Fannie Hurst has become addicted to the use of certain methods in writing that tend to make otherwise harmless material sensational. Her greatest fault, the use of the one-word sentence (if one word and a period may be called a sentence) is not sanctioned by authorities on English grammar. It is piquant, however. Such piquancy was designed for the readers of the metropolitan tabloids who ride to and from their business on one foot, and want their reading matter in a companionate style. This style has proved highly popular with the American public, as is evinced by the sales of this author's works, but its popularity may be accounted for by the fact that conversation in a tale is far more pleasing to us of the United States than is description. The one-word description is an ideal mate for the one-word sentence of conversation.

If previous tales of the Pennsylvania Dutch are accurate, then this story is also accurate, for it follows the general rules laid down for the character and behavior of the people of Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry. The large family is included, and included so often that the reader wishes that *David Schuyler*, whom the story really concerns, were a hermit. If the family had been subordinated, the book would have been far more interesting. We begin to get interested in *David* when the family pushes its way into the story.

The story is in the form of a more or less daily account. This subterfuge has been overworked and it is time that it was consigned to a resting place beside its father, Pepys. Then the author uses multitudinous footnotes, so many that they become a bore. Note, if you get that far, the footnote on page 271. The fake magazine references are also overworked.

The book does not harmonize with the author's reputation. It reeks of inexperience and Miss Hurst has passed that stage.

THE BRIDGE OF SAN LUIS REY

by THORNTON WILDER.

This bridge is practically identical with one that was included in a motion picture production some years ago. The picture dealt with wild life among the Incas, the llamas, and the Andes, and, in the course of unraveling the plot, very nicely depicted an Inca-built bridge. This structure was not designed for heavy duty but was really a short cut between mountain peaks for such travellers as strayed up that high. It was a simple affair of narrow planks bound together with leather thongs. The whole affair undulated with the

least breath of wind and was no place for those with weak hearts.

With a contraption like that for the main locale of the story, one is certain that things are going to happen. They did. Back in 1714 a catastrophe occurred and Mr. Wilder endeavors to give us the whole affair without omitting any details. To give the reader entire satisfaction as regards local color, there is even a burning-at-the-stake.

What is bound to impress the reader is the easy fashion in which the author unrolls his plot. One will wonder how so much detail is disposed of.

The characters are well-drawn in few words. If we are to believe the author, human character and nature has not changed at all since that remote date. You ought to get acquainted with *Uncle Pio* and the *Marquesa de Montemayor*. The twins are interesting for the course of a few pages, but they soon become incomprehensible. The *Periochole*, quite like our actresses of today, after gaining a bit of popularity, tries to break into society. She does, after trying five years.

Thornton Wilder, to common knowledge, has never been near Peru. In fact, he was raised in China. To read this book one would believe him to be at the very least a full-blooded Inca. His first book, *The Cabala*, proved highly popular and with the publication of this one, critics have acclaimed him as having attained the front rank of living novelists.

THE BELLAMY TRIAL

by FRANCES NOYES HART.

The title of this book is sufficient to consign it to the hinterland of taboo fiction. The book will make itself known, however, only by its sheer ingenuity.

The Saturday Evening Post gave this story the front page for several issues. Now it comes in a compact form with all of the characters nicely tabulated and cross-indexed on the front page. The guilty party is listed there in bold print, but who can pick him or her out?

The author has strictly confined herself to the courtroom and even at the end, when some of the prominent persons are left in precarious positions, she does not attempt to rescue them, for that would be venturing out of the courtroom and the story could not be called the *Bellamy Trial* any longer.

The inner workings of the law are presented on a gold platter so that those who expect to serve on a jury some day can get an idea of what their duties will be. Although the American court has been divested of the greater part of the pomp and ceremony inherited from the British, we still have the court crier, a very amusing individual indeed when one considers *Ben Potts*.

The district attorney, as usual, comes in for a rub, although it appears to be unintentional on the part of the author. With a ready store of the most stinging sarcasm, he holds all but the judge on edge.

The plot is suggestive of the Hall-Mills case but cannot be compared to it because of the great difference in the participants. The author deserves praise for the portrayal of character and her ability to set forth conversation that fits in with each person.

—Mark Allen, '30.

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING THE ARCHITECTS CLUB

A Society for Architects, Architectural Engineers
and Landscape Architects

"For they're just jolly good fellows."

Architects Club is in session and the students are assembled in the old lecture room in Brown Hall. President Harold C. Summersett calls the meeting to order. Formal? Yes, as formal as the nature of the embryo architect will permit, but do not be surprised when not less than three members exercise floor rights simultaneously.

But then, the purpose of the club is not accomplished by its parliamentary law, rather, the purpose of the club is to present to the student in architecture a series of lectures and discussions dealing with the problems met by the practicing architect and architectural engineer.

Whenever possible, a speaker from a prominent architectural firm is entertained, or perhaps a manufacture of materials for the architect's use is secured to present a few interesting side-lights on the profession.

During the last quarter we were permitted to listen to an address on "Professional Practice" by Mr. Kempton of the Allied Architects Association of this city and an interesting lecture on "Stained Glass" by Mr. Reiser of the Von Gerichten Art Glass Company.

The social activity of the club is limited to one event in the school year, the annual Beaux Arts Ball. This is perhaps the most colorful social event of the winter season and is copied from the Beaux Arts Ball given in New York City each winter. The art and decorations are entirely the work of the architects and the landscape students and design of costumes gives rise to keen competition among the students.

A recent change in the order of the club is the advanced hour of the weekly meeting. For the better convenience of the members, the hour has been changed from 8 o'clock Wednesday evening, to 4 o'clock Wednesday afternoon.

The program for the present quarter has not been arranged at present, but will continue the practice of inviting speakers from the city, and will also include several "round-table" discussions led by the President.

The officers of this year's club are: President, Harold C. Summersett; Secretary and Treasurer, Thomas Darby; Senior Representative to Engineer's Council, Laddie Cervenka; Junior Representative to Engineer's Council, Richard Phelan.

The Department of Architecture is taking part in the Building Show exhibit to be held during the early part of April in the Columbus Memorial Hall. About 100 drawings by the students will be exhibited on the stage which has been reserved for the department. The show is to be on building materials particularly to the making of homes. Talks are being given by the department of architecture on the building of homes through radio station WEO.

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